

share his wealth with the poor. He had a wife who was very pious and devout. The story is told that God took mercy on him and came once in the disguise of a poor Brahmana and asked alms of him, Purandara refused. Then the Brahmana went to the wife. Fearing lest her husband should know, she gave him a small trinket which had come to her from her mother. The beggar took the trinket to the husband for sale immediately. The latter suspected that the trinket should have been given by his wife and went home vexed and angry and asked for it. The wife went in as if to bring it and did not know what to do. In great distress she thought of taking poison, when the trinket dropped into her hand. She took it and showed it to her husband. He wondered that it should be with her and looked for it where he had kept it and found it was gone. This miracle opened his eyes and he renounced property and became God's minstrel. Tradition says nothing further about Purandaradasa's religious experience. From the songs he has sung we can gather that, though renunciation came, realisation did not come immediately, that men doubted and distrusted him and often treated him badly, and thought lightly of him as an ignorant person. This hurt him at first, but years of suffering seem to have brought him peace of mind. This appears from what must

have been songs of his last days. The
intervening
period however was obviously one of
strenuous ascent.
It is proposed in this essay to give an
idea of the
spiritual experience of Purandaradasa and
a brief out-
line of the wisdom which found
expression in his
songs.